

HISTORY

OF

SANDBACH
And DISTRICT

BY

R. W. TOMEINSO.

* Illustrated by Platinotype Views. *

1899.



HISTORY OF SANDBACH AND DISTRICT,

CONTAINING AMONGST OTHER THINGS A CHAT ABOUT

The Antiquities of the Town,

A FULL DESCRIPTION OF

SANDBACH CROSSES,

AN INTERESTING ACCOUNT OF THE

Local Charities, Flying Visits to Brereton Hall,
Old Moreton Hall, Lodley Unfinished Church,
and a number of Reminiscences of Old Sandbach,

BY

R. W. Tomlinson.

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Preface.

IN presenting the Public with a popular History and Topography of Sandbach and District, at a price within the reach of all, the author feels that he is supplying a long felt want.

Every possible research has been made to obtain the most accurate and complete accounts of events relating to the past history of Sandbach, several days having been spent amongst the ancient documents and histories in the British Museum, London.

As authenticity is the grand desideratum of Topography, all possible care has been taken to avoid errors.

The work embraces a general History and description of Sandbach and the surrounding district; and contains the spirit of all that has been previously written on the subject, extracted from ancient and modern authors, amongst whom we might mention Omerod, King, Bede, Smith, Earwaker, Andrews, etc. To Mr. William Dean and Dr. Latham I am especially indebted for many interesting items which have gone to make the reminiscences of Old Sandbach the most complete ever published.

To all who have in any way helped forward my research I tender my sincerest thanks, and should my primary object—that of re-invigorating a healthy interest in local History—be attained, I trust they, with myself, will feel amply rewarded.

The Work is accompanied with four Platinotype Views of the District, taken from the latest photographs, and especially printed for this publication.

R. W. TOMLINSON.

Sandbach,

January, 1899.

Contents.

	PAGE
Historic Sandbach	3
The Principal Sights	5
The Ancient Crosses	6
Restoration of the Crosses	11
St. Mary's Parish Church	12
Sandbach during the Civil Wars	16
The Charities of Sandbach	17
Sandbach Grammar School	22
The Old and New Market, and the Town Hall	25
The Old Hall	27
The Literary Institution	28
The First Corps of Volunteers at Sandbach	28
Origin of "Piper's Hollow," and "Scotch Meadow"	29
St. John's Church, Sandbach Heath	30
Lodley Unfinished Church	31
Brereton	32
Brereton Hall	33
Brereton Church	34
Old Moreton Hall	35
A few Reminiscences of Old Sandbach	38

Illustrations.

Sandbach Crosses	...
St. Mary's Church, Sandbach	...
The Old Hall, Sandbach	...
Brereton Hall	...

HISTORY OF SANDBACH.



SANDBACH is situated about thirty miles from Chester, near the Staffordshire border of the County, in a flat but well-wooded country and a dry sandy soil. East of the town is a small rivulet which forms one of the principal feeders of the river Wheelock.

There is no doubt that Sandbach—or to use the antique form “*Sandbec*”—is of very ancient origin. Some historians tell us it was a Saxon village in the Kingdom of Mercia, and that its inhabitants were converted to the Christian faith by the instrumentality of four priests from Northumberland, who were messengers to King Penda, somewhere about the year A.D. 653. There is not much ancient history of Sandbach however, that can be authenticated until we come to the reign of King John, when according to George Omerod, Esq., the famous Cheshire Historian, a family was certainly settled here, and they held Sandbach from Aldford fee, and had then assumed the local name. The first of these that occurs is Richard de Sandbach, who had a younger brother Thomas, a Clerk. This Richard, in 1230 was Sheriff of Cheshire. A dispute arose between him and Earl Randle Blundeville as to the right to present to the church of the town, and according to the Cheshire Doomsday, sixteen free and lawful men, of whom Robert de Pulford was one, were chosen to make a return on oath. This assize came into the Earl's Court, before the Earl, Philip de Orreby, Justiciary, Roger de Montalt, Seneschall, William de Venables and

other Barons and Knights, and they returned on their oath, that the advowson belonged to the Earl, and had belonged to his great grandfather, Randle Meschines, who had presented the same to Steinulfus, the Priest.

John de Sandbach occurs in the Cheshire Pedigrees as the son and heir of Richard and father of Roger de Sandbach. On the death of Richard, Roger renewed his grandfather's claim to the Church, (1238), against the Abbot of Dieulacres, to whose Convent it had been intermediately given by Earl Randle in a charter witnessed by Walter Abbot, of Chester, and William de Vernon, Justiciary, (1230-34). This cause was tried and eventually judgment was given in favour of Roger de Sandbach, who pleaded against the authority of the Cheshire Doomsday. On hearing this decision the Abbot left the Court, and refused to acknowledge its judgment, though admonished "per tria paria militum."

A claim was then put in by Fulco de Orreby, on behalf of the King, and judgment was again given in favour of Roger de Sandbach; but subsequent to this the dispute was removed by Certiorari into the Court of King's Bench, before which the Justiciary laid the Cheshire Doomsday. This contained the record of the trial before mentioned, and the release of the advowson by the Lord of Alford, and a statement that the Earl had given the advowson of Sandbach to God and the Abbey of Dieulacres, and also that no one had presented since. On these grounds the Abbot recovered, and the record of the decision contains some remarkable expressions respecting the incontrovertible evidence of the Cheshire Doomsday which I have before referred to. Notwithstanding this decision the Abbot of Dieulacres paid one hundred shillings to Roger de Sandbach and to Clemence his wife, for the confirmation of the Church to him. (1243). Subsequent ratifications of this confirmation were made by Roger's descendants, and for a considerable period the Abbots presented to the church without further dispute.

Passing on to the 2nd year of the reign of Edward II we find that John de Arderne of Alford sold to Sir Hugh Venables the marriage and wardship of Richard, son of Thomas, heir of Sir Richard de Sandbach, with a proviso, that if he died under age the said Hugh should have the wardship of Thomas, younger brother of Richard. The said Richard married and had issue, Elizabeth, who married John Legh, of Booths; and it was their daughter Maud, who brought the manor of Sandbach and a moiety of Sproston (which descended with it), to her husband, Richard Radclyffe, of Ordeshall, (Lancashire). The manor of Sandbach was subsequently sold by the Radclyffe family to Sir Randolph Crewe in the reign of Queen Bess; and from him it passed (by marriage) to the Offleys, with Crewe and other estates. A later marriage however brought the property again into the Crewe family, and it has descended with them to the present Rt. Hon. Earl of Crewe, who holds a Court-leet and Court-baron for the Manor of Sandbach, to which all the residents within the vill owe suit and service. This leet was granted to Sir John Radclyffe of Ordeshall by Queen Elizabeth.

The following is an extract from "The Vale Royale of England" by Smith and Webbe, published by King in 1656:—

" Sandbach is a pretty market town and hath belonged long
" to the noble race of Knights of Ratelyffes of Ordshall in
" Lancashire, its situation is very delightful. The chief
" Seigniory thereof now belongs to Sir Randal Crew. The
" Ale here at Sandbach is no less famous than that of Darby
" for a true nappe; and I have heard men of deep experience
" in that element contend the worth of it, that for true
" dagger stufle, it should give place to none."

The Principal Sights.

"**W**HAT are the principal sights of Sandbach?" is a question which the stranger newly arrived in the town

may very probably ask. The writer of this History, as a native of Sandbach, familiar with its highways and bye-ways, will at once answer the question by giving a short list. The writer does not profess to include here a number of minor objects of interest: these are simply

THE PRINCIPAL ATTRACTIONS.—

THE ANCIENT CROSSES.	ST. MARY'S CHURCH.
THE OLD HALL.	THE SCOTCH COMMON.
ST. JOHN'S CHURCH.	LODLEY UNFINISHED CHURCH.
BRERETON HALL.	MORETON OLD HALL.
ETC.,	ETC.

The Ancient Crosses.

TO the west of the St. Mary's Church is the Market Place, containing the Crosses of Sandbach, which may indisputably be ranked amongst the finest monuments of antiquity of this kind now existing in the Kingdom. The period when these Crosses were erected is uncertain, but in some instances it is supposed that they were erected about the year A.D 653, when Peada, (King Penda's son), returned a Christian convert from Northumbria to Mercia, attended, according to Bede, by four Priests, who were deputed to preach the Gospel through his dominions. Bede, in his "Ecclesiastical History of the Nation of the Angles" states that the names of these Priests were Adda, Cedda, Betti and Diuma. They are supposed to have preached at Sandbach, and to have baptized Peada and the members of his Court, on the spot where the Crosses now stand. Some Historians tell us, that Peada desiring to mark such an event, erected the now notable Sandbach Crosses. Taking this to be the true account of the circumstances of their erection, and it seems most likely, having the sanction of Omerod, Palmer, Rimmer and others, they would be erected about A.D. 653.

It appears from Smith's Account of Sandbach in "Vale



ANCIENT CROSSES, SANDBACH

"Royale" that these Crosses were standing in the reign of Elizabeth, and had of course been saved from the violence of the Reformation. Whether they were thrown down by the Puritans, acting under the orders of Elizabeth against superstitious images, or during the civil disturbances in the reign of Charles the First, does not appear, but it is certain that they did not remain in a perfect state after this second period.

The substructure consists of a platform of two steps, on which are placed two sockets, in which the Crosses are fixed. At the angle of each stage of the platform are stone posts on which rude figures have been carved.

The dimensions of the monument according to Mr. Palmer of Manchester are as follows :—

Height of Platform including Sockets, 5ft. 6in.

,, Greater Cross..... 16ft. 8in.

,, Smaller Cross..... 11ft. 11in.

Greatest height from ground 22ft. 2in.

The proportions of the several parts of the Crosses and substructure are as follows, being taken from accurate details and measurements made by Mr. Palmer, when the Crosses were laid upon the ground in 1816—

Height of each step of platform, 1ft. 6in.

,, Sockets..... 2ft. 6in.

Diameter of Large Socket at base 5ft. 9in.

,, Smaller ,,, 4ft. 6in. by 3ft. 9in.

LARGER CROSS:—Height of Pillar 15ft. 10in.; 10in. of the circular top only remaining, but this appears to have been 3ft. in diameter. Breadth at base 2ft. 7in. by 1ft. 10in. on the South side and 2ft. on the North, at top 1ft. 2in. by 10in.

SMALLER CROSS: Height of pillar, 10ft. 9in., and of the broken top, 1ft. 2in.—The deficiency of the pillar and the diameter of the top cannot be exactly calculated. Breadth at base, 2ft. 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. by 1ft. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ in., and at the highest perfect part 1ft. 6in. by 1ft.

GREATER CROSS :—The frame work in which the figures on each side of this Cross are included, divides near the base and becomes forked, like the termination of an ancient pennon, in the angles of which, on the *East Side* are figures of Cherubs looking upward. Immediately above the division is a large circle containing three figures, to the centre one of which the others appear to be paying obeisance. Over the circle are three other figures, the centre one in this group appears to bear something like an infant in its arms, on its left is a figure with a palm branch in its left arm and a dove over its head; while on its right is a similar figure with a cross over its head and a book in its hand. After a short deficiency there appears a clear representation of our Saviour in the Manger, with animals on each side, and an angel hovering over Him. Above this is a Crucifix with Christ attached to it, some of His disciples (or, according to Cole's conjecture, the Virgin and St. John) standing at the base, and the four angles of the Cross are filled up with the symbols of the four evangelists, viz., an angel for St. Matthew; a lion for St. Mark; a bull for St. Luke; and an eagle for St. John. Above this are various mutilated figures, some of which are in niches and one is inverted. The lowest of these are conjectured by Cole to be God, the Father, sitting on a throne with the Blessed Virgin, and her babe before Him. Still higher up are implements of the passion,—hammer, pincers, etc., and at the top are figures of men, much mutilated.

The *West Side* has been divided into eight double compartments. The first part is filled by dragons, whose wings and other members are complicated in a most fanciful manner. In the second compartment are mutilated representations of winged figures. In the third a winged and a sitting figure, probably representing the apparition of the Archangel Gabriel to Zachariah in the Temple. In the fourth is represented Simon, bearing the Cross, preceded by a figure holding a curved wand, while in the fifth is our Saviour—marked by the glory round His head—drawn along by a person holding a rope, with one end of which

the hands of Christ are bound. The sixth compartment is entirely destroyed, and the two remaining ones are too much mutilated to be described.

The *South Side* is filled up with foliage, knots and fancy ornaments, but no particular meaning can be attached to these. In the midst is a man, thought to represent John the Baptist, in the wilderness.

The *North Side* appears to have contained eleven figures, over which is a large fish, mouth downwards, with a tongue triply cloven. The highest figure is bending under the tongue in the act of adoration, and the next is eagerly stretching upwards. It is difficult to account for these figures, otherwise than by supposing them to be the eleven original apostles, on whom, together with the newly-elected one, the Spirit descended in the form of cloven tongues of fire, St. Matthias being purposely omitted. There is a peculiarity about the carvings on this side not observable elsewhere. The figures are placed in cells, in a double row from the bottom, the division on which each stands being cut off at one hand so as not to touch the sides, leaving an uninterrupted communication between the whole.

SMALLER CROSS :—The smaller Cross has a variety of human figures placed within niches and lozenges (diamond-shaped compartments) on the east and west side and others within niches on the north and south sides, placed in a border of knots. While the larger Cross seems to be carved with Scriptural Subjects, the smaller Cross carvings represents characters of a Secular nature.

On the *North Side* appears to be represented the journey of Peada (King Penda's Son) from Mercia to Northumberland, with all his nobility and attendants to solicit the hand of King Oswy's daughter, Alchfleda. At the top is a double dragon with the tongues skillfully interlaced.

The *South and East Sides* are exceedingly curious, they are filled up with figures of men and animals in cells and diamond shaped compartments. There is great doubt as to the interpretation of these sides.

On the *West* side are groups of figures, some kneeling and some standing. This is believed to represent the conversion of Peada—King of Mercia—and his Court into the Christian religion.

Omerod has it that the 12 figures on the North side have a marked resemblance to the eleven on the larger Cross, while on the West is a group of three persons apparently intended to represent the Three Persons in the Trinity.

Both Crosses have terminated in ornamental circular or elliptical tops, round which other figures have been carved with their heads toward the centre, and their feet toward the exterior. This part of the small cross seems to have been pierced in such a manner as to give to the head the appearance of a cross not unlike the Maltese in form.

We have it on the authority of Kings' "Vale Royal" that the following lines are engraved on the small Cross; "which could not be read unless a man be held with his head downwards."—

"In Sanbache, in the Sandy Ford
Lieth the ninth part of Dublin's lord;
Nine to, and nine fro',
Take me down, or else I fall."

It is also stated that on the same monument the following lines are engraved in old English letters:—

"With awful steps approach this shrine,
Sacred to Druid erst divine;
Here ancient Virtue still preserve,
Nor ever from its precepts swerve."

It is almost impossible to trace either of the above inscriptions now.

Restoration of the Crosses.

TOWARDS the latter end of the 17th, Century the central part of the large Cross and some fragments of the other were carried by Sir John Crewe (or by his orders) to Utkinton, and set up as an ornament to the place, the figure of our Saviour, which he considered a relic of Popery, being carefully covered over with hard mortar. On the death of Sir John Crewe these fragments were removed to Tarporley where Cole saw them and made drawings, which are now to be found with his other M.S.S. in the British Museum. Later, these stones were found to be deposited at Oulton Park and about this time regret was expressed in certain quarters that the monument of the piety of our Saxon ancestors should be suffered to remain in a state of mutilation. A very few months elapsed before George Omerod Esq. was requested by the town of Sandbach to undertake the superintendence of their Restoration and he had the pleasure of seeing this effected in a most satisfactory manner, whether considered with reference to the voluntary exertions of the inhabitants in collecting the scattered fragments and contributing the means of their Restoration, or to the good taste and genuine liberality of Sir J. G. Egerton in restoring those larger portions, which had constituted a unique ornament of his park at Oulton.

Omerod, in his history of Cheshire, states that the lower parts of the large Cross were found in the walls of the Town Well, which were taken down for this purpose, a small portion of them having been previously discovered there by Messrs. Lysons. The two next large fragments came from Oulton. The higher parts were found at Sandbach, the most important of them, viz., the termination of the pillar, united to the fragments of the circular top, was dug out of a garden near the Market Place. The lowest fragment of the small Cross escaped the fate of the rest, and was the only part standing in 1816. The second was brought from Oulton, whilst the highest fragment was found placed in

the pavement of the principal street. Another stone was found to be doing duty as the door step of a house near the Town Well. A few portions had disappeared shortly before, and one large fragment is known to lie under the foundations of a house in Sandbach, this is supposed by some to be the present Liberal Club.

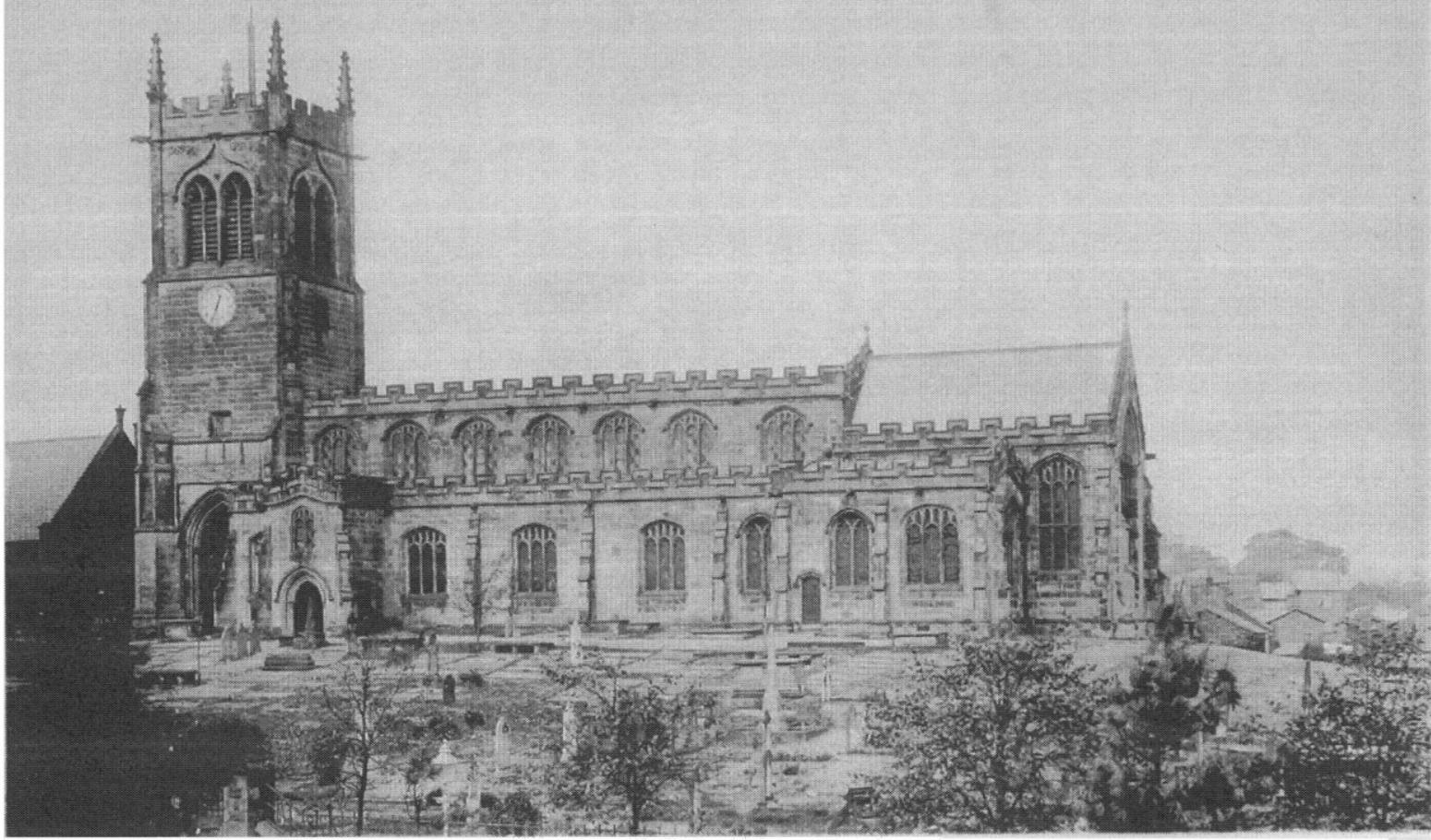
The re-erection of the Crosses was effected in September of 1816 by Mr. John Palmer, Architect of Manchester, whose liberality on the occasion as well as his scientific arrangement cannot be too highly commended. All attempts at restoration were directed to be religiously abstained from, and the chasms were filled with plain stone, matching as nearly as possible, the colour of the original.

Omerod states "The enthusiasm which the re-erection of the Crosses excited among the lower orders was excessive, and a concourse of people poured in from distant Townships. On some days the crowd was sufficiently great in the Market Place to interrupt the operations of the workmen."

The Restoration fund was raised partly by subscriptions. The amount of subscriptions reached £19 5s. Od. and as the total cost of collecting the scattered parts and of re-erecting the Crosses was £37 5s. 4d., it is supposed that the balance of £18 0s. 4. came out of the rates.

The Parish Church.

THE Parish Church of St. Mary's stands on an eminence near to the rivulet before referred to in this work. It is clearly ascertained from Doomsday that there was a Church at Sandbach at the Conquest, but after long and careful search it has not been possible to establish the date of erection, but Omerod in his list of Rectors and Vicars states that before 1128,



St. MARY'S CHURCH, SANDBACH

one Stenulphus was Rector, and a list of Ministers from that date is furnished. The next entry is in 1230 when the following occurs— “ Thomas, Parson of Sandbache, witness to a Charter of land in Church Hulme.” There is then a lapse of nearly 100 years before the next entry, when the first Vicar (Dui Ricci Bingillon) was installed in 1327. From this date we have a complete list of Vicars down to the present esteemed Vicar, the Rev. John Richard Armitstead, M.A. In 1817 the Church was described as follows :—“ A handsome Tower, Nave, Chancel and side Aisles, which terminate in two smaller Chancels belonging to the Manor of Wheelock and the Hall of Bradwall. The whole is built of red stone and handsomely finished in the obtrusely pointed style. The Nave and side Aisles have richly carved roofs of oak, erected in 1661 as mentioned on one of the inscriptions.”

In the years 1847-8-9 the Church was restored. Sir Gilbert Scott was the Architect and with the exceptions that thirty six feet were added to the Chancel, and the north and south aisles extended, he built the Church as far as possible like the old one. The old oak ceilings before referred to were restored, but the high pulpit which originally blocked the middle aisle, was replaced by a new one on a stone pedestal placed on the north side of the Chancel Arch. The irregular oak pews too, were replaced by open benches, while the old font which bore the date 1667 was removed and a more modern one substituted.

The total cost of the Church Restoration was £7000, nearly £2000 of which was spent in taking down the old tower and rebuilding it. Like the old one, the modern tower with its noble arches, spans the wide pavement from the north to the south gates and is supported at each angle by massive buttresses. The height of the tower is about ninety feet and it is surmounted with a battlement and four handsome pinnacles.

The Macclesfield Courier of July 14th, 1849 in its report of the re-opening of the Church, stated that the old Church was

built "of a friable and perishable sandstone like so many of the Cheshire Churches. The whole building north, south, east and west, was crowded with galleries, the capitals of the pillars had been cut again and the windows blocked up, and in the side gallery there was little room to stand upright. The roof was found to be insecure and the tower was also found to be in a very dangerous state. The tower which was a very fine one, presented the peculiar feature of open arches, upon which it rested and was beautifully proportioned." During the re-building, a few remains of an earlier Church were met with and these fragments are now preserved in the vestry.

According to an old "return" made in 1549, Sandbach then possessed "one chales (Communion Cup) and a ring of *iii* bells." As far as can be ascertained these bells remained in the Church until 1719 when they were replaced by four of the bells now in present use. The Church to-day boasts of an excellent peal of eight bells.

The Church is immensely rich in stained glass windows, which have been inserted from time to time in memory of noted local personages. The last memorial window was inserted to the memory of one of the Holbrook family in 1873 and it will be interesting to local readers to know that it was a member of the same family, (The Hon. H. Holbrook, J.P., late Minister of the Crown of the British Columbia, Canada) who in recent years has provided the Church with a handsome illuminated Clock.

The Communion plate belonging to the Church bears some interesting writings. The alms-dish is without any; but on the smaller plate the following occurs :—

"The gift | of the Revd. Mr. | B. Baldwin,
vicar, | to the parish of | Sandbach | 1737."

On two of the smaller plates is inscribed :—

"The guift of Lawrence Steele, Sonne of
Richard Steele, of Sandebach, in Cheshire,
to the use of the sayd Parish of
Sandebach for euer, 1656."

There are three splendidly carved wooden screens in the Church, one at the entrance to the chancel, and one each on the north and south sides respectively.

The gross value of the living of Sandbach is about £1200 per annum.

Many readers will be interested to know that it was on February 20th, 1828 that Rev. John Armitstead, father of Rev. J. R. Armitstead was made vicar. He was the son of the Rev. John Armitstead, of Cranage Hall and a graduate of Oxford. He held the position of Vicar for nearly forty years and during his ministering did a large amount of good. He took a leading part in the management of the Sandbach charity estate, and in the erection and endowment of the Almshouses. During his life the old Church was pulled down, rebuilt and enlarged and three new Churches were erected by subscriptions at Wheelock, Elworth and Sandbach Heath. The Sandbach Grammar School was rebuilt and its management remodeled and the National Schools were established. He was the author of the celebrated pamphlet "Sabbath-day Cheesemaking not a work of necessity ; or Dialogues between a country Clergyman and his Parishioners" which revolutionised agricultural customs in the district. He died in 1865 and was succeeded by the eldest son, the Rev. John Richard Armitstead, the present Vicar. Like his father he was educated at Oxford, matriculating on the 28th, of June 1848. He took his B.A. degree in 1852, and his M.A. in 1855. From 1859 to 1862 he held the Incumbency of Goostrey, and was the Rector of Wendlebury (Oxfordshire), from 1862 to 1865. During the whole of his life he has taken an active part in the affairs of the town and has held some of the highest positions.] This year, owing to advancing age he has resigned the Chairmanship of the

Urban District Council after being Chairman of this and the defunct Local Board for 18 years. The rev. gentleman who has just recently been made an Hon. Canon of Chester Cathedral is now assisted in his ministerial duties by his son, the Rev. J. H. Armitstead, B.A.

Sandbach During the Civil Wars.

ON the authority of Omerod we have it that a Skirmish took place at Sandbach in 1651 between the Townsmen and Lesley's Horse, escaping from the defeat at Worcester. Tradition, which is, however, incorrect in describing the Cavalry as Cromwellians, states that the conflict took place on an open square north west of the Church and this square has ever since then been called the Scotch Common. After a sharp skirmish, the dispirited, travel-weary Scotch were compelled to surrender with the loss of several killed and wounded. The exhausted state of the troops accounts for the easy triumph of the Townsmen over the heroes of Marston Moor and Philiphaugh. The following particulars of the encounter are taken from Contemporary Journals—

Mercurius Politicus. No. 66. p. 1057. [News] from Newcastle-Under-Lyne, September 6th, 1651—

"The Scots, after great and total rout, posted back towards Scotland the same way they came and were got as far as Sandbatch upon Thursday Sept. 4th, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon, at least 40 miles distant from the place of the battail, where the honest men of Sandbatch had a counter-scuffle with them, such a one as deserves to be taken notice of. The enemy were then supposed to be about 1000 Horse and came through the town of Sandbatch, that day being the fair day, but the honest townsmen and countrymen perceiving their condition, fell upon them with Clubs and Stones and the very poles wherewith they made their

stalls and standings ; and as they came down they still fell upon them, fetching some off their horses. They so managed the business that when the Scots offered to fire they ran into their houses and as soon as that party was past, which had the pistols and powder (there being only the frontiers that had shot) they still fell upon the remainder of the troops and so continued pealing them and billing them during the passage of all their horse. In this scuffle the Town took about 100 of them and killed some, as also there was some of the countrymen killed. This relation is given by one that was an eye witness ; it being very notable that such men should engage so great an armed body with such instruments. But the Lord has stricken a terror into the enemies hearts, who minded only the making good of their flight." This account also adds that about 30 persons were killed and wounded. The prisoners were placed in the Church and there kept for several days. The Rev. Henry Newcome, who at this time was the incumbent of Goostrey, thus notices these events in his *Autobiography* (Chetham Society's Publications, vol. xxvi. p. 33). "The battle having been at Worcester Sept. 3rd [1651] by exchange I preached at Sandbach, Sept. 7th, by the invitation of my cousin G. Manwaring at Arteluyd. The poor Scots were miserably used in the country, and so many of them put into the church at Sandbach that we could not preach in it ; but I preached in the church-yard both ends of the day, to a great congregation."

The Charities of Sandbach.

J. P. EARWAKER, Esqr. in his history of Sandbach pub. 1890, states that Sandbach has been exceptionally fortunate, not only in the sums of money which have from time to time been bequeathed to the parish for charitable purposes, but also in the manner in which this money has been invested. When the church was rebuilt in 1848, the late Vicar had the

following list of benefactors carved in the stone work on the north and south sides of the chancel. The list begins on the north side as follows :—

[COPY.]

ORIGINAL DONORS TO THE CHARITY TRUST.

William Liversage, Wheelock	...	...	...	£10	0	0
William Liversage, Junr., Wheelock	...	...	...	40	0	0
Lawrence Swettenham, Bradwall	...	...	...	10	0	0
Humphrey Royle, Bradwall	...	...	...	38	0	0
Hugh Wheelock, of Wheelock	...	...	...	38	0	0
The use of £55 of the last two sums to be laid out in bread every Lord's day.						
Robert Hulse, Wheelock	...	...	...	2	0	0
Peter Massey, Sandbach	...	...	...	1	10	0
William Furnival do.	...	...	...	1	0	0
Richard Kettle, Betchton	...	...	...	1	10	0
John Twemlow, Betchton...	...	...	...	5	0	0
William Phythion, Moston	...	...	...	5	0	0
Thomas Kent, Elton	...	...	...	2	0	0
Robert Richardson, Sandbach	...	...	...	1	13	4
John Wright, do.	...	...	...	1	0	0
Hugh Sherman, do.	...	...	...	20	0	0
William York, do.	...	...	...	30	0	0
Katherine Hassall do.	...	...	...	20	0	0
Millisente Rathbone do.	...	...	...	5	0	0
William Raven, do.	...	...	...	10	0	0
William Lingard, Rector of Warmingham	...	...	...	1	0	0
John Kent ...	...	...	...	5	0	0
Thomas Moulson, Wheelock	...	...	...	10	0	0
Hugh Goodhind, Arclid	...	...	...	20	0	0
William Lownds, Hassall	...	...	...	10	0	0
Ralph Wilbraham, Nantwich	...	...	...	13	6	8
Thomas Swettenham, Bradwall	...	...	...	10	0	0

To which was added by other charitable persons a further

sum of £120 13 4, making in the whole £420, the purchase money of the Burslem estate.

The names are continued on the south side of the chancel :—

John Hulse of Elworth Hall granted a Rent charge of £4 out of lands in Elworth to be given yearly the first Sunday after Christmas Day by the Vicar and Churchwardens to the poor Housekeepers dwelling in and belonging to Sandbach Township. Sarah Daniels of Sandbach spinster gave £300 the dividends to be laid out in bread by the Churchwardens for the poor of Sandbach of good character attendants on the Sunday at the Parish Church. Francis Welles of Sandbach gentleman 1694 gave an annuity of £5 to be distributed in weekly payments to twelve poor persons living in the township of Sandbach nominated by the Parson, Churchwardens and Overseers of the said Township. The above sum is now paid from Stock at 3 per cent Consolidated Annuities in the names of the Official Trustees of charitable funds.

John Wheelock to the Parson and Wardens £6 per annum from land in Hassall for teaching poor boys."

The various sums of money, enumerated in the first of the above lists amounted in all to the sum of £420, with which, in 1673, an estate was purchased in Burslem, (Staffordshire), and this has been the source of a large amount of income to the poor of Sandbach, owing to the discovery of some valuable coal-mines upon the estate. A further sum of £80 was invested in the purchase of some more land in Burslem in 1682. These two properties were held by the trustees, most of whom were living in or near Sandbach. The population of Burslem was rapidly increasing about this time, and some of the land was built over and in the year 1814 the 61 acres let for £278 16 6; but in

1834 the rent had fallen to £212 11 6. In 1814 power was given by the trustees to certain persons called the Cobridge Coal Company to dig for coal at a royalty of 3/6 for every 20/- worth of coal at the pit's mouth, with a proviso that in no one year less than £200 a year rent was to be paid.

The money received from the coal pits was carefully invested by the trustees year by year, and in 1835 over £10,000 had been received and invested. In 1827 an estate in Little Hassall was purchased for £7,960. This contained 139 acres and the rent received from it was distributed by the Vicar and Churchwardens according to the original trust. At the time of the Charity Commissioners report in 1836, the charity income for the estates at Burslem and Hassall amounted to £448 11 6, exclusive of the dividends arising from the produce of the mine rents and the mine rents themselves, and there was a sum of £2,860 invested in the 3 per Cents. Another charity, known as "Francis Liversage's Charity," dating from 1863, and invested in lands in Betchton and Haslington, was then distributed with the above, and in 1836 the total income from all sources available for distribution among the six townships in the parish amounted to between £500 and £600 year.

In 1848 a private account of Parliament was obtained entitled "An Act to provide for the better administration of certain charities in the parish of Sandbach, in the County of Chester, and the distribution of the income thereof, and for vesting the estates and property belonging to the charities in new Trustees, and for enabling the Trustees to grant leases of the Charity estates, and for other purposes." In accordance with this scheme certain small payments are made annually. The scheme also stated that the sum of £200 was to be annually distributed among the poor of the parish, together with the income of Smallwood estate, a sum was to be paid for the purposes of education, amounting in all to £300 per annum, of which £100 was for the Sandbach National School and £200 for

the Grammar School, the head-master of which was to receive £140 and the second master £60. School buildings, with a residence for the head-master, were to be built out of the charity funds, and properly furnished, and regulations were made for the efficient management of the School. Twenty Almshouses were to be erected for the reception of twenty poor persons over sixty years of age, who were to receive £10 per annum each, for which the sum of £200 a year was annually to be paid out of the Charity Funds. The residue of the receipts from the charity lands and the mine rents were to be invested each year till a sum of not less than £3,000, and not more than £5,000, had accumulated when the same might be employed by the Trustees in aid or extensions of any of the above charitable purposes.

This act of Parliament was in 1887 further modified by the Charity Commissioners. The special small sums were to be paid as before, and the £200 to the poor; but £350 per annum was to be paid to the Almshouses instead of £200, and a further yearly sum of £120 was to be given in pensions to out-pensioners. The £100 to the National School was also continued. Subject to these payments, the whole income of the Charity was to be devoted to educational purposes, (as further described under the account of Sandbach Grammar School), under the management of a body of fifteen Governors—nine called Representative Governors and six called Co-optative Governors.

In 1890 the income of the Charity estate was about £1,600 a year.

In addition to this important charity, there are other smaller ones that require notice. The first of these is Bougheys Charity. The following particulars of this charity are interesting—Ellen Boughey, of Sandbach, Spinster, by her will dated 21st, October 1691, after desiring to be buried in the chancel of Sandbach Church and bequeathing certain small legacies, devised all her lands and hereditaments whatsoever in the County of Stafford to her kinsman William Boughey for his life, subject to an

annual payment of 10/- to the Minister of Sandbach for the time being to preach a sermon on the anniversary of her death. After his death the said lands, &c. were to go to the use of the poor of the town and township of Sandbach for ever, subject to the payment of the 10/- yearly. The Church Wardens and their successors were to enter into the said lands and secure the rents thereof and distribute the same in bread every Sunday for ever. This generous bequest consists of a small estate, containing about seven acres, at Chesterton, (Staffordshire). In 1836 the income was £13 a year, but the income now amounts to about £120 per annum.

By the will of the Rev. John Hulse, of Elworth Hall, a sum of £1 is annually received by the Church-wardens from the tenant of Elworth Hall, and this is distributed in sums of one shilling each to eighty poor people. There is also Sarah Daniel's legacy of £300, the interest of which is distributed in bread by the Church-wardens.

Francis Welles, of Sandbach by his will, dated 30th November 1694, left £5 per annum from certain lands in Sandbach, and 20 shillings from land in Monks Coppuhall to be distributed in weekly payments to twelve poor persons residing in Sandbach. Since then, I believe, these lands have been redeemed by a money payment, invested in 3 per Cents, from the interest of which the charity is now distributed. The township of Bradwall has two small charities belonging to it, viz: the interest of £20 left by Jane Yarwood, and one called Moore's charity.

Sandbach Grammar School.

SANDBACH, like most other large parishes, possessed a School, occasional references to which are met with so early as 1606, when John Shaw, son of the Vicar of Sandbach, is described in the parish Register as "Schoolmaster." What is

known as the *Grammar School* was, however, started about the year 1677, when by an indenture dated 28th September, Richard Lea, of Sandbach, assigned to William Hayes, Vicar of Sandbach, Charles Mainwaring, John Aston, Francis Welles, John Furnival, Richard Loundes, John Stonier, Randle Rode, and George Twemlow, a part of a field in Sandbach, whereon a building, intended for a School-house had been erected. This building appears to have been built at the cost of Mr. Francis Welles, of Sandbach, who was assisted by contributions from various persons connected with the parish. Some forty years later another indenture, dated 10th December, 1718, was made between Thomas Welles, clerk, Vicar of Sandbach, Son and heir of Francis Welles, deceased on the first part; Richard Loundes, of Hassall, son and heir of Richard Loundes, deceased on the second part; and Thomas Stephens, Esq., of Wheelock, Randle Wilbraham, Esq., of Rode, John Amson, Esq., of Lees Lawrence Booth, Esq., of Twemlow, William Oldfield, Esq., of Bradwall, Charles Ward, Esq., of Shrewsbury, Richard Vernon, Samuel Watkis, Wilham Furnival and William Rode on the third part. It then states that Francis Welles, then deceased, had designed to give a piece of land in Sandbach for the benefit of a School, for teaching twenty poor boys belonging to the parish, and at his own cost had erected a building thereon, which was then, and had been for sometime, used for that purpose, and whereof Thomas Hall, clerk, was then schoolmaster. It then gives a list of persons who contributed towards the cost of carrying so useful a design into execution. These contributions amounted in all to £257. Sir John Crewe, of Utkinton, had also granted a rent charge of 17s. 4d. from land at Styth, (Salop), by a deed dated June 22nd 1677. It is also stated that at the time these donations were made, it was intended that there should be only twenty poor boys, Sir John Crewe and his heirs were to nominate two, Thomas Stephens two, Roger Wilbraham (father of the Randle Wilbraham named above) two, Francis Welles four, Randle Rode one, Robert Hulme one, and

Thomas Moore one, the rest to be chosen by the trustees.

Between the years 1718 and 1729 Charles Ward, Esq., late of Bradwall, by his will, left £200, the interest of which was to be applied to the School, and three boys were to be named by John Jervis, Esq., of Bradwall, and his heirs, to be taught there until they were fit for one of the Universities, and they were to be called 'Ward's Scholars.'—It appears, however, that no scholars were ever appointed, the amount of interest derived from the legacy being too small. In 1781 a sum of £420, given to the School at various times was invested in land at Smallwood, the rent of which went to the Schoolmaster. At the time of the Charity Commissioners' Report in 1836 this rent realised £67 14s. per annum, which was paid to the Rev. Robert Batty, the then Schoolmaster, who had held that office for twenty years.

The following is a list of the Schoolmasters as far as is known:—John Shaw (1606-14), Thomas Bailey, Thomas Shaw, Ottiwell Kent, Thomas Kent, Thomas Addenbrooke, Randle Haslehurst, Richard Holder, William Dickin, John Davies (1741). From 1741 to the end of the century, no mention of any Schoolmasters have been met with. It is probable that the Rev. John Sibson, who was Curate-in-charge for many years, may have acted in that capacity, as directly after his death in 1796, the Rev. Charles Lockett, B.A., of Worcester College, Oxford, was appointed Schoolmaster. The Rev. Robert Batty appears to have succeeded Mr. Lockett, and was the Schoolmaster in 1836.

By a fortunate investment of the Sandbach Charities, (referred to in my account of the Charities), the income was very much increased, and in 1848 a private act of Parliament was passed to provide for their better administration. In 1887 this act was amended and provided for scholarships and set forth the fees and salaries to be paid.

The first head master of the Grammar School elected after

the new scheme (1848) was the Rev. Lewis Evans, M.A., late fellow of Wadham College, Oxford. He remained at the School until his death on the 28th, March 1869. A handsome stained glass window was placed to his memory in the Church by his "fellow parishioners, neighbours and former pupils." His successor was Rev. John Chambers, M.A., of St. John's College, Cambridge, and he was followed in 1871 by the Rev. W. H. Maddock, M.A., late fellow of St. John's College, Oxford. Mr. Maddock resigned at Christmas 1881, when the Trustees appointed Mr. R. C. Imrie, who had been Assistant and Second Master for many years, to act as Head Master. He acted in this capacity till the appointment of Mr. G. H. Heslop, M.A. In February 1882, Mr. Imrie was presented with a purse of money and a testimonial to commemorate his long connection with the School. Mr. G. H. Heslop resigned the post of Head Master in 1898, having been appointed Head Master of Sevenoaks School, Kent. His successor at Sandbach is Mr. S. W. Finn, of St. John's College, Cambridge.

When Mr. Heslop came to the School it was in a very poor condition, there were only a few scholars and it is owing to the strenuous endeavours of Mr. Heslop that the School is now one of the leading establishments in Cheshire for middle class education. During his Head Mastership a good Laboratory and new Class rooms have been added and also an open air swimming bath. There is a gymnasium and large playing-fields attached to the school, which stands in a most healthy situation. A large amount is annually awarded in Scholarships and Exhibitions.

The Old and New Market, and the Town Hall.

SANDBACH Market dates back as far as 1578, when Sir John Padeliffe of Ordsall conceived that the town was a

suitable place for a Market, as it was so centrally situated. After considerable trouble he obtained the necessary grant. The Market proved an immense success and to-day we boast of one of the best Markets in Cheshire. The Market day is Thursday and on this day hundreds of people may be seen wending their way from all the towns and villages round. Up to nine years ago, when the present Town Hall, and Market was built, the Market was held in the open air on the Square where the Crosses stand. On this square also stood the Old Town Hall, and as it no longer keeps its isolated state on the south of the open area, a short description may be of interest. Its once red bricks, at the time of its demolition, were brown with age, and no ornamentation had been wasted upon the building. The tall, narrow windows were all on the upper story, overlooking the Market Place on one side and High Street on the other. This upper storey, which was devoted to town business, assemblies, etc., rested like a level bridge on two clumsy blocks of brickwork. These, on the Market side, were utilized as shops at one end, and as prison cells at the other, whilst from the High Street admission was gained to the public rooms and offices. The covered space thus bridged over was, on Market days, devoted to farmers wives with butter and eggs, and to butchers and their stalls.

The Market Place itself is sectionally paved with cobble stones, and it was on these stones that the stalls were set up, this is greatly altered now as the retailers have a covered Market under the new Town Hall, while the old square is now used as a Wholesale Market.

The late Rt. Hon. Hungerford Lord Crewe, of Crewe Hall, in 1889, in a most generous manner conveyed as a gift to the town of Sandbach, the perpetual right to all the Market tolls, together with a site for the new Town Hall and Market. These were erected at a cost of £5,000. The architect was Mr. Bowers, of Nantwich.



THE OLD HALL, SANDBACH.

In addition to a Market, Sir John Radcliffe, established in 1579 two Fairs, and another was added at a later date. Formerly these Fairs were largely attended, but of late years they have been very poorly patronized, and are in fact almost extinct, except in name. The dates of these Fairs are Easter Tuesday, the first Thursday after the 12th. of September, and the 28th. of December.

The Old Hall.

THIS is a large handsome black and white building of timber and plaster, finished in the Elizabethan style, with gables, and was erected about the middle of the 17th Century. It stands opposite the south wall of the Parish Church, and is well elevated. It occupies the site of the ancient mansion of the Sandbaches. Its position appears to have been selected with a view to the strength that might be desirable in a castellated Manor-house. Very little, however, seems to be known of its past history. At one time it served as the Parsonage, and in the year 1845, a portion of the Hall was licensed as an Hotel, while the other part was divided into small tenements. It has at different times been thoroughly repaired, and now the whole of the building is used as an Hotel. In 1887, the late Lord Crewe spent something like £1,000 upon the building. It may be interesting to note that the late Charles Ford, Esq., of Abbey Fields, Sandbach, was born at the Hall. On one side of the building there is the following inscription:- "T.B. 1656."

Omerod mentions the Hall in his history and I give his statement because it is especially interesting:- " Margaret, who was the wife of John de Radclyf, of Ordesdal, Knight, held *inter alia* (among other things), the manor of Sondebache, of Thos. de Stanley, as aforesaid, and which Inq. (enquiry) finds that there were on the same manor one Hall, two chambers, one chapel, one stable, and one kitchen (of no value); 48 messuages,

500 acres of land, and 40 of meadow (of the yearly value of 39 marks), 40 of wood, 100 of moss (yearly value 20s. 3d.), 3 ponds (yearly value 3s.), one water mill (yearly value 4 marks), and 18s. 10d. rent. Total value p.a. of the whole manor, £30 10s. 2d. Died on the Sat. next before the Feast of S. Bartholomew last; John, son of John de Ratelyf, son and heir, aged 50 years, who in his livery, Sept. 2nd, same year (1627) is stated to be then a Knight." Unfortunately there are no direct descendants of this family so far as is known, though in all probability the family continued for some decades after the Legh and Radclyf intermarriages.

In the interior of the Hall may be found some excellent old carvings and panellings in oak, and the visitor to Sandbach will do well to pay a call, and I am sure that Mr. John Bebbington, the present host, will be delighted to "show them round."

THE BLACK BEAR INN, situated in the Market Place, is also an old picturesque black and white building, very similar to the Old Hall, but on a much smaller scale. It bears the date 1634.

The Literary Institution.

THE Literary Institution, which is situate in High Town, was designed by Sir Gilbert Scott, and erected, chiefly by subscriptions, in 1857. The lower rooms are used as reading rooms, library, and for small meetings, the long room upstairs being used for balls, concerts and public meetings. The Petty Sessions and other special Police Courts are also held in this room. The cost of the building was £2,700.

The First Corps of Volunteers at Sandbach.

IN 1803, Colonel Ford, former owner of Abbey Fields, in conjunction with Randle Wilbraham, Esq., of Rode Hall,

raised a Corps of Volunteers, of which he was Lieut-Colonel Commandant, and Randle Wilbraham, Esq. was Major, their appointments bearing the 20th August, 1803. The other officers of the Corps were as follows:-**MAJOR**, Weston Bailey; **CAPTAINS**, William Watkis, Walter Daniel, John Cartwright, John Twiss, John Morris, and John Wilson; **LIEUTENANTS**, John Miller, Samuel Swan, John Lockett, Charles Hilditch, John Twemlow, Richard Latham, Daniel Galley, and John Furnival; **ENSIGNS**, William Done, William Penlington, Thomas Podmore, and James Colclough; **CHAPLIN**, Richard L. Salmon (Vicar of Sandbach); **PAYMASTER**, James Colclough; **SURGEON**, Peter Matthias; all were appointed on September 27th, 1803. The regiment consisted of six Companies, comprising 360 men in all. Colonel Ford died at Abbey Fields, on the 14th of April, 1839, at the age of 72 years. He was buried at Sandbach.

Origin of “Piper’s Hollow” and “Scotch Meadow.”

THE origin of the names “Piper’s Hollow,” and “Scotch Meadow,” have often been discussed, and so a word in passing may be of interest. Tradition gives several accounts of the burial of the dead, after the skirmish at Sandbach, which as before related took place in the year 1651, between the townsmen and Lesley’s Cavalry. Some have asserted that they were buried at the north side of the Churchyard, while other Historians tell us that they were buried in a low-lying pasture, near the Fields Farm, Sandbach. This meadow is still known as the “Scotch Meadow.” Then again it has been said that they were buried in a large hollow on the left hand side of the high road from Sandbach at Brindley Green. This latter place has borne the name “Piper’s Hollow,” because it is said, that a wounded piper, who had been taken there as dead, recovering

consciousness, played on his bagpipes a requiem for his dead comrades. The exact place of the burial, however, has never been agreed upon, the two latter assertions appear to be most correct, as tradition has handed down names, which undoubtedly refer to something having been enacted in which Scotchmen had had a hand.

St. John's Church, Sandbach Heath.

THIS Church was built and endowed in 1861 by Sarah Sibson, in memory of her respected father, the Rev. John Sibson, (thirty-six years Curate of the Parish Church at Sandbach). He died in 1796, aged 60 years, but Miss Sibson's death did not occur till the 11th July, 1857, when she was 90 years of age. The architect of the Church was Sir Gilbert Scott. Over the entrance is the following inscription carved in stone :—" This Church is dedicated to St. John the Evangelist, and was built and endowed with funds bequeathed by Sarah Sibson, in memory of her father, John Sibson, thirty-six years Curate of the Parish of Sandbach, A.D. 1861."

The Church, which was consecrated on the 12th June, 1861, is built in the shape of a cross, with a tower and spire, standing on the four arches forming the junction of the Nave, the Transept, and the Chancel. This is very unusual in a Church so small as this is, the sitting accommodation being only 300 persons.

As the Church is only of recent date there is not much to relate regarding it. There is a fine organ in the Church which was the gift of Ann Woolley, and was placed there by that lady in memory of her husband, John Woolley, in 1864. The clock in the tower was given in memory of Charles H. Rickards, Esq., of Brick House, in 1887.

The inscription on the stone walls of the Church are works of art, chiefly by the late Augustus Marshall. There are some beautiful oak carvings on each wall of the Chancel and in the Chapel, all the work of the present and much esteemed Mrs. Kennedy of Brookside. The Parish is rural and not much occurs in the neighbourhood to disturb its quietude. The first M.P. for the Crewe Division (the late Geo. W. Latham, Esq., of Bradwall Hall), is interred in the burial ground of the Church, and perhaps his funeral was the greatest event that has occurred since the erection of the Church. The Rev. Sydney H. Armitstead is the Incumbent of the Parish, and he is much respected by his parishioners. There is a school connected with the Church, built in memory of the Rev. John Armitstead, M.A., a former Vicar of Sandbach. Mr. A. F. Carter is the head master of the day school.

Lodley Unfinished Church.

AROUND the district of Hassall and Lodley may be spent many profitable hours. The landscapes around affords the artist (and the thoughtful passer by) a source of delight and it is in this spot that we have, perhaps what they have nowhere else in the Country, an *Unfinished Church*. Many years ago, a gentleman farmer, Mr. Lowndes by name, resided at Hassall Hall, now the residence of Mr. Yates. He was of strong religious feelings, and he viewed an extensive neighbourhood, void of any provision for the spiritual wants of the people with misgiving. His loving heart was moved, and after due consideration he determined to build a Church out of his own private purse. Operations began in good earnest about the year 1836, the site selected being a summit immediately above Lodley Smithy, a very central position for the farms and cottages at that time. A structure of modern style was designed to seat between 400 and 450 people. About ten

crypts were built, which cost a considerable sum in bricks alone. At the Queen's Coronation in 1837, the building (so far as it had progressed) was, as a resident has quaintly expressed it, "literally buried with flags" amid great rejoicings. The following day however, Mr. Lowndes was seized by a fatal illness and died. His successor did not see things in the same light as the deceased, neither did he know the requirements of the people of Lodley. Thus the good intentions of the benevolent gentleman were unfulfilled; although the walls and roof were already complete, and the floor partly put in, the Church remained, and still remains, unfinished. It is indeed a singular sight as well as depressing, to see, what was intended to be God's Sacred Place, going to ruin. The walls are overgrown with ivy, and the masonry and wood work are cut with hundreds of names of those who have visited the place. The people in those days must have been very negligent, or one would have thought they would have tried to purchase the partly built Church, and to have raised money enough to finish it. As it is, it is enough to make the benevolent donor, "turn in his grave" as the saying is, to see the results of his thought and work.

Brereton.

BRERETON-CUM-SMETHWICK is a Parish about $2\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Sandbach. The manor of Brereton was held under the Barony of Kinderton nearly as early as the time of the Conquest, by the ancient family of Brereton, who continued to possess it for many generations in uninterrupted lineal descent. Sir William Brereton, of Brereton, the head of this ancient family, which had spread into several branches in various parts of Cheshire, was, in 1624, created Lord Brereton, of Leighlin, in Ireland. On the death of Francis, Lord Brereton, in 1722, the male line of this principal branch of the family became extinct, and the manor of Brereton passed under the will of



BRERETON HALL, SANDBACH.

Lord Brereton, to his sisters Jane and Elizabeth, and being afterwards vested in the latter was bequeathed by her to her sister's son, Sir Charles Holte, and after several intermediate owners, is now possessed by John Howard, Esq

Brereton Hall.

BRERETON HALL, called by Webb "the stately house of Brereton," and described as one of the most complete brick buildings in Cheshire, was erected in the reign of Queen Elizabeth; a part only of the ancient mansion is now standing. The Hall is approached through a massive ornamental stone gateway, with lodge adjoining, which is about a quarter of a mile distant from the Hall itself. It is situated on a gentle rise on the bank of the river Croco and is very close to the Church.

The building consists of one entire side of a quadrangle and portions of two others. The principal front is to the west, having wings terminating in gables, and two lofty octagonal towers in the centre, rising at each side of the entrance, connected by a semi-circular arch near the summit. The towers are enriched with large bay windows extending without interruption across the towers and the centre, with various ornaments in the mixed styles of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the rose and portcullis, the Royal Arms, and those of the family. Over the doorway is the date 1586. The dining room of the Hall is a noble apartment. In the windows of which, and round the top are the arms of the principal gentry, together with other devices in stained glass. Though historians have much to say that is interesting about Brereton and its lords, they have preserved rather an awkward silence with reference to the Hall itself. The present owners are the Howards, and the Hall has just passed to Mr. John Howard, by the death of his mother at Blackpool, in December, 1897. Brereton Hall is noted for having had a visit paid to it by Queen Elizabeth, who stayed a

night and a day under its roof. Visitors to the Hall are shown the room and bed in which the Queen is said to have slept. The present esteemed tenant of the Hall is John Moir, Esq.

Brereton Church.

THE Church is a stately structure, dedicated to St. Oswald. It is built in the style of English architecture, consisting of Nave, Chancel, and side Aisles, and a tower with five bells. The interior has a handsome appearance, and the oak roof is elegantly carved. The Church was built about the reign of Richard I (1189), and was made parochial and endowed with the tithes of Brereton in the reign of Henry VIII (1509). In the Church is an elegant monument to William Smethwick, Esq., who died in 1643 ; on a marble monument in the Chancel is an inscription in Latin, importing that in ancient times, the Church of Brereton was a donative Chapel in the Parish of Astbury ; that the ancestors of Sir William Brereton, Baron of Malpas, who erected the monument in the year 1618, were buried in the Churchyard at Astbury ; but that after the Chapel of Brereton had been made parochial, the ancestors of the said William Brereton had been buried in the Chancel of the Church. On the north side of the Chancel was formerly a stained glass window, with four figures representing the persons who slew Thomas-a-Beckett at the high Altar in Canterbury Cathedral ; it is said to have been destroyed during the Civil War. The living is in the patronage and incumbency of the Rev. A. L. Royds.

The Bear's Head Inn at Brereton is a beautiful old house. It is a black and white Elizabethan building, and is much admired by visitors. The present hostess (Mrs. Yates), caters for both small and large parties.

Old Moreton Hall.

CHESHIRE is rich in buildings of the sixteenth century, but among them Old Moreton Hall occupies a conspicuous position. It is the Mecca of the artist and photographer who never tire of reproducing its outlines on canvas. To the tourist and antiquary it is equally interesting. It connects to-day with the spacious times of Elizabeth, if not an anterior period. As you look at the old Manor House of the Moretons, which stands just off the highway between Congleton and Newcastle, and situate about seven miles by road from Sandbach, you can easily be carried back in imagination to the days of the Tudors when England was torn with religious rivalries, and slowly emerged into a hitherto unknown period of prosperity and tranquillity under the reign of a Queen whose love of her country almost amounted to a passion. Then it was that London became the mart of the world, and that stately mansions and manor houses arose in various parts of the country whose distinctive type of architecture we call Elizabethan. Of such is Moreton Hall, which, without exaggeration is one of the most remarkable in the country.

According to King's "Vale Royal," Moreton Hall was the seat of two "worthy gentlemen and esquires of most ancient continuance," one of whom, named Moreton, he reports "gave breeding to that famous Bishop Moreton, who in the time of Richard III. contrived the project of the marriage of the two heirs of the houses of York and Lancaster." This is supposed to refer to Cardinal John Moreton, at one time Archbishop of Canterbury, but we have no actual proof that he was born at Moreton Hall. Lettice Moreton carried the estate by marriage to Sir Gralam de Lostock, of Northwich, and the ownership of the estate continued in the male line until the death of Sir William Moreton in 1763. Dying childless, it passed to his sister's son, the Rev. Richard Taylor, rector of West Dean, who assumed

the name of Moreton. He was succeeded in 1784, by his son the Rev. William Moreton, whose two daughters became his co-heiresses. One of them, Frances Annabella, married a Mr. John Craigie, of Roxburghshire, and died in 1792, when her sister Miss Elizabeth, became sole heiress of the property. Holland Ackers, Esq., bought the Estate some few years later, and it has descended to the present owner, Mrs. Ackers.

Within the last few years Moreton Old Hall has been restored in a wise spirit in regard for its antiquity. This restoration was found to be necessary in order to arrest the progress of decay. It will now be able to withstand the ravages of time and the effects of the weather for a considerable period, and will stand to be the wonder and admiration of succeeding generations. Surrounded as it is by a moat enclosing about an acre of land, the building owes much of its picturesqueness to its irregularity. The entrance is by the bridge on the south side, and through the outer and inner doors that guard the gateway. This gateway brings us into the beautiful courtyard which is admired by all. The windows of the Hall running round the yard form a unique sight. Above the two great bays are the following words carved on the solid oak:—

‘GOD IS AL IN AL THINGS
THIS WINDOVS WHIRE
MADE BY WILLIAM MORETON
IN THE YEARE OF OURE LORD MDLIX.
RICHARDE DALE CARPENTER MADE
THIES WINDOVS BY THE GRAC OF GOD.’

On the ground floor are the banqueting hall, 34ft. by 21ft., a smaller hall 22ft. by 15ft., and the Chapel in which services are now held on Saints' days. The rooms on the first floor were originally used as bed and sitting rooms, whilst on the second floor is the long gallery, or ball room, which is about 70ft. in length and 12ft. wide. This gallery, with its wainscoting and windows extending nearly all round the apartment,

contains figures at each end representing fate and fortune. The former figure has a sword in one hand thrust through a globe, and a pair of compasses in the other, the accompanying inscription running, "The speare of Destinie whose ruler is knowledge." Fortune is represented by a female figure pointing to the motto on her wheel, "Qui modo scandil corruet statim," with the inscriptions at the sides, "The wheele of Fortune, whose ruler is ignorance." The fireplace in the retiring room is a remarkable piece of work to which the attention of the visitor is directed. The side figures represent justice and mercy, whilst in the centre are the arms of Moreton quartering those of Macclesfield.

At every turn there is something to admire in the quaint old building, and a very pleasant and profitable hour or two can be spent here. The nearest railway station is Mow Cop, N.S.R

About 1890, Moreton Hall was in such a neglected state that it was feared the principal parts would collapse. This fear caused a copy to be erected at Bidston Court by R. W. Hudson, Esq. On his model occurs the following inscription:—"This house was built by Robert Hudson and Gerda his wife, Anno Domini MDCCCXCI.; these bay windows being copied from those at *Old Moreton Hall*, in the hope that when they have perished these may remain."

Such an inscription fully explains the existence of a copy. Upon the beams of the great hall will be found these quaint verses:—

"When the trees are white with rime,
And the ground is black and bare,
Warinthe and welcome ye shall finde
Underneath these gables faier,
Charitie and jolitie
Carve on every beam of wood;
Mercie, truth, equalitie,
Man's eternal brotherhood."

A few Reminiscenses of Old Sandbach.

THE following is a list of the principal residents of Sandbach in 1782, as published in Broster's *Chester & Cheshire Guide*:—Bostock, Samuel; Broome, Thomas, Gent.; Broome, William; Bull, Thomas. Mereer and Draper; Darlington, Richard; Furnival, John; Furnival, George; Galley, Richard, Mercer and Draper; Garnett, Samuel, Gent.; Haddon, Rev. Mr., Vicar; Henshall, George, Corn Dealer, Grocer, and Haberdasher; Hilditch, John; Hodgson, George; Holland, John; Lindop, William, "George" Inn; Lowndes, Thomas, Gent.; Lowndes, William, junr.; Mainwaring, John, Esq.; Millington, Thomas, Surgeon; Parker, John Robert, Esq.; Parrott, Thomas; Podmore, Richard, Ironmonger; Proudlove, Joseph; Ravenscroft, Thomas; Richardson, Robert; Richardson, John; Sibson, John, Rev., Curate; Skerratt, Joseph, Attorney-at-Law; Twemlow, Richard, Surgeon; Wells, John, Esq.; Whitehead, William, Attorney-at-law; Whitney, Thomas; Wright, Thomas, Cheese Factor; Wright, Thomas, Gent. There are many of the descendants of these people now living in and around Sandbach.

Leaving 1782, and coming down some few years, we find that Sandbach was noted for its superlative cleanliness. Its oppressive quietude might be broken on market days, or by the passing of a stage coach through the town. There was never any garbage about, or if there had been the first good shower swept it all down hill to the river, or as it was more often called "the bruck." Between the years 1822 and 1825 the main road below High street was considerably raised, and carried over a new bridge, thus levelling the town approach on the east. The new road was opened in the summer of 1826. On the low land below the church, which is now laid out as gardens, then stood a house occupied by a Mr. John Broome, and after the new road

was finished this house was taken down, and all the usable material was conveyed to Union street, and was utilized in the building of the house now occupied by Dr. Riddell. On returning from the new bridge, on the left hand side, standing back from the road, rose two ancient half-timbered dwellings, each with double gables and a scarcity of paint. A sign above the farthest from the bridge indicated the "Three Tuns Inn." It had good cross beam windows, but otherwise presented a forlorn aspect. No tavern sign defaced the front of what was then Sandbach Hall. A few dark red houses in a row, and a shop or two up steps—now occupied by Mr. Peter Hall, Mr. Moores, and Mr. Eaton—brought us to the fine old Coaching House, the "George and Dragon," locally known as "The George." This was the busiest spot in the whole town. The building was rough cast, it had large square windows, and was approached by three semi-circular steps. It was here the London Stage Coaches stopped to change horses and to refresh the passengers, and Hunt Balls and Dinners were frequently held at this Inn. There was a side gateway leading to an extensive yard, and still beyond to the bowling green. A Mr. and Mrs. Emory kept the Inn.

Exactly opposite this was a row of ancient timbered houses with pinnacled gables—still standing—the black and white was a trifle fresher than that of the Old Hall. The first shop which had its doorway at the corner was occupied by a Mrs. Norbury, who kept a Confectionery and Dressmaking business. She worked for a class of whom Lady Crewe was one. Her rival in the town was a Mrs. Stringer who had a dainty Milliner's Shop on the spot where Mr. Baskerville's establishment now stands. Next to the corner shop, and leading into the market was a dwelling occupied by Mr. Latham, Ironmonger and the adjoining house and shop belonged to a Mrs. Francis, Straw Bonnet maker. Beyond this was a public house called "The King's Arms." There was also a row of houses

behind these buildings, and a causeway from them went into what was then the front street. One of these houses was occupied by a Mr. Charles Bate, who was the Clerk of the Parish, and he also kept a school. His eldest son occupied another of these houses. Past the opening leading to where the National Schools now stand, was the house and shop of Mr. Yarwood, Baker and Flour Dealer. Then came Mrs. Stringer's Millinery Shop, and one other house, which was the Vicarage—a large three storied, double fronted residence of time-toned brick, which is the present School House—fills up the Market Place on the east side as it was then. Where the present Liberal Club stands, the Misses Moss kept a school for young ladies. Education had not reached a very high standard in Sandbach when that was considered the best girls' school in the town. There was also a Draper's Shop on the north side, kept by a Mr. Percival, and it was his uncle, Mr. Bull, who first introduced the Silk Trade into Sandbach. The western side of the Market consisted of a row of miscellaneous shops and a public house called the "Coach and Horses." A Mrs. Slater carried on an extensive business as Milliner in the shop now occupied by Mr. George Walley, and it may be interesting to note that the late Mr. J. Boston, formerly Boot and Shoe Manufacturer of Westfields, Sandbach, married a Miss Slater. The corner Shop was rented by a Mr. Timmis.

Before leaving the Market Square, it may be interesting to note that the present Town Hall is the third one, the two previous ones standing in the Market Square. The first ran about level with the present roadway through the Square, with a corner to the High Street. When this was pulled down a second Hall was built as described in another part of this History. During the building of the second Town Hall a story is related to the effect that a workman was carrying a board of mortar up a ladder, and when about half way up, the church clock began to strike twelve o'clock, so he threw his mortar to

the ground and finished work, saying, "Bless thy iron tongue." Returning again to High Street, I feel constrained to mention two human antiquities residing in a house situate where Boughton's Saddlery Shop now is. They were elderly maiden ladies named Sibson, remarkable for their precise manners, erect bearing, and their antiquated dress, the fashions of which could not have changed for more than forty years. Next to Sibson's was Galley's, the principal draper of the town. On this spot now stands Mr. H. Billyard's Drapery business. Lea and Richardson's premises was then a private house occupied by a Mr. Hibbert. Then came a small farm with a plot of land. Where Mr. Nixon's Shop now stands was a Stationery Business kept by a Mr. William Lindop, while a Mr. Henshall occupied a small shop and farm where Mr. Lees and Mr. Hulme reside. The "Red Lion Inn" does not appear to have undergone much change, but where Messrs. Leadbeater and Wakefield's premises now are, was a shop occupied by a Mr. Holland. Then came a thatched house with a gable end to the street. On the site of Tomlinson's Printing Works stood three old thatched cottages which were approached by a descent of several steps. These cottages were leased by Mr. Ralph Smith, a retired cattle dealer. Several private dwelling houses brings us to th' Top o' th' Town. In one of these houses, Lawyer Skerratt, a man of great note in his day, was born. If we now turn to our right we shall come upon what is known as the Scotch Common. It was then, as now, an irregular patch of ground where grass made an effort to exist, and it was enclosed within a rude triangle, two sides of which held cottages, mostly housing shoemakers. On the spot where Mrs. Birchenough now lives was built the first National School, the second standing where Mr. Foster's Fruit Shop is, while the third still occupies a site just off the Market Square. What is now known as the Temperance Hall was standing about seventy years ago, and was then used as a Sunday School, and did double duty as a Dissenting Place of Worship. The third long side of the Commons was wholly

claimed by a high brick wall that shut Squire Wilson's mansion from vulgar observation. The mansion and grounds were given to the town in 1897 by the Marriott family as a Technical School, Public Gardens, and Pleasure Grounds. If we now continue our walk through what is known as Hawk Street and through the Market Place and High Street in a direct line to Lad Lane—now known as The Stumps—we pass on our left hand Mrs. Louch's abode (Fern Cottage), where the wiry notes of Miss Louch's harpsichord might reach us through an open window, and then on between green hedgerows to the extreme limit of the George Bowling Green they shut from sight, to where another path diverged on the left and terminating at Jacob's well, then renowned for its tea water, now disused. Instead of going down to Jacob's well we will pursue our original track until we come upon a row of newly-erected cottage houses, ugly and monotonous, bearing the name of Union Street. Here we will still go back yet a few more years, when where Union Street now stands was green fields. At this time the Primitive Methodists were badly in need of a plot of land on which to build a chapel, and by the ingenuity and keen-ness of our old and respected veteran, Mr. William Dean, a piece of land was secured in Union Street, and on this the first Primitive Methodist Chapel was erected. Coming down again to about sixty years ago, we will hurry along the then one-sided street, and when at the top, turn to our right past Dr. Holland's, past William Peatson's, the tailor, to th' top o' th' Town, where the Wheat Sheaf stands. In passing we might mention that where the row of cottages now are, opposite Rosson's Coffee House, was a sand hole and pond, the water of which was drained off and carried by a drain to Middlewich Road, under the supervision of Mr. William Dean. On the site of the present District Bank was an open space on which stood two thatched cottages, graced in front with a pond of obnoxious water and an ash-heap. Next to these cottages was a weighing machine, and a cottage and shop beyond that reaching up to the Wheat Sheaf.

There was a big private house where Fox's Chemist shop is, and on the spot where Poole's Boot shop now stands was an old building used as a tinman's shop. There was a cottage adjoining, and it was in this cottage that the Primitive Methodists first held their meetings. Blind Thomas Lowndes lived at this cottage, and during the services the public amused themselves by shooting at the door.

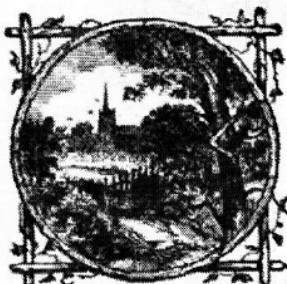
Welles Street and Green Street were at this time only green fields, and Lawyer Latham drew up plans for the erection of a street of houses, and on the recommendation of Mr. W. Dean, he also secured a stone yard which was owned by Lord Crewe, and made two streets, thus making the land much more valuable. The first plot of this land was sold to the Primitive Methodists for their Chapel, as the one in Union Street was rather out of the way.

On the site of the present Town Hall stood a public house known as the "Crewe Arms," and elbowing in the corner was a barber's shop. The site of the Hungerford Café and the buildings onwards to the Square was garden ground, with a curriers's shop belonging to Emmanuel Booth and a small house with gable end to the street, occupied by Peggy and Dicky Fisher, near the middle. Near the Institution was the butcher's shop of Mr. Ralph Arden, then a sprightly young man. Madame Wells, a lady of great benevolence lived close by. About the site of Mr. Allman's shop in High Town, was a confectionery establishment; and next door, on the Middlewich Road, lived an eccentric inhabitant of the name of John Birchall, or as he was more familiarly called "Old Crab." This gentleman had a passion for sunflowers, and his garden immediately before the front door was generally well filled with them. Half way up the Hill was situated what was called the "poor-house." A more elegant building has since been erected at Archid. Near the Hill Factory lived Charles Dunning, the possessor of a bear,

who gained a livelihood by visiting the various "Wakes" in Staffordshire and Cheshire, and giving the usual performances. He is said to have been a pugilist of no mean order. Over his house door was the carved image of a bear.

One of the earliest postmistresses at Sandbach was Miss Sibson, the post office being where Boughton's Saddlery Establishment is. At that time the letter carrier was a Betty Kent, and she carried the letters in her apron. Mr. Richard Eachus, Auctioneer, also had the post office at a later date, and he was succeeded by Mr. Proudman, who only held the position for a few years, and was succeeded again by Mr. Richard Eachus, and on his death it passed to the late Mr. William Eachus.

We have now made a circuit of Sandbach as it was between fifty and seventy years ago, when shoemaking was the staple trade of the town.



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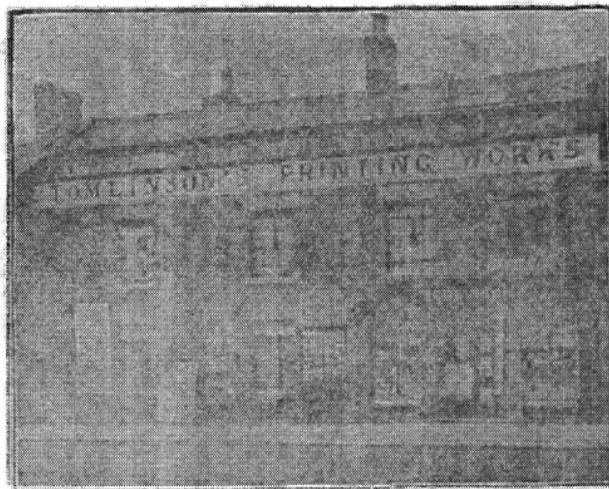
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